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Croatia

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards - Certification

FAIRS Export Certificate Report

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Report Highlights:

This report provides information on the export certificates required by the Government of Croatia. This annual report was updated in November 2014.

Section I. List of All Export Certificates Required By Government (Matrix) :

Disclaimer: This report was prepared by the USDA/FAS' Office of Agricultural Affairs in Zagreb, Croatia, for U.S. exporters of domestic food and agricultural products. While every possible care has been taken in the preparation of this report, the information provided may not be completely accurate either because policies have changed since its preparation, or because clear and consistent information about these policies was not available. It is highly recommended that U.S. exporters verify the full set of import requirements with their foreign customers, who are normally best equipped to research such matters with local authorities, before any goods are shipped. FINAL IMPORT APPROVAL OF ANY PRODUCT IS SUBJECT TO THE IMPORTING COUNTRY'S RULES AND REGULATIONS AS INTERPRETED BY BORDER OFFICIALS AT THE TIME OF PRODUCT ENTRY.

Croatia as a member of the European Union follows the EU directives and regulations. It is therefore recommended that this report be read in conjunction with the Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards (EU-28 FAIRS) export certificate report produced by the US Mission to the EU in Brussels, Belgium:

<http://www.usda-eu.org/trade-with-the-eu/eu-import-rules/fairs-reports/>

or search:

<http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Pages/Default.aspx>

The document requirements for exporting animals, plants and food to the EU are extensive. Appendix 1 of the EU-28 FAIRS export certificate report gives an overview of the required EU health certificates for products imported into or transited through the EU; therefore, these also apply for the Republic of Croatia. It should be noted, however, that model certificates may not be available for products that have never been exported to the EU before. References to the EU legislation that forms the basis for the health certificate are also provided in the EU-28 FAIRS.

While certification requirements are developed at the EU level, the Member State (MS) inspection service is responsible for enforcement of the EU legislation through inspection of imported goods and the corresponding certificates. Contact information for those services in the Republic of Croatia is given in Appendix I of this report.

In general, health certificates are required for all imported products of animal origin and phytosanitary certificates are needed for all plant products that could introduce pests into the EU. Import certificates must be in the official language of Croatia, which is Croatian. For the time being, the English version of certificates is being accepted by the inspection team although it is expected that the goods start arriving accompanied with bilingual certificates (English and Croatian).

Section II. Purpose of Specific Export Certificate(s)

EU legislation, and now the legislation of the Republic of Croatia, call for many health and supervisory requirements that are meant to guarantee that imports meet the standards of production in the Republic of Croatia.

Import requirements for animals and animal products are harmonized across the EU in a three-part process. First, the EU must recognize a country as eligible to export a particular animal or animal product. The EU recognizes the U.S. for all animal products. However, in the absence of an approved U.S. residue plan for horsemeat, the U.S. has effectively been restricted from exporting horsemeat to the EU since 2011. For several products, the EU has lists of approved establishments based on submissions from U.S. government agencies. Only those products processed at approved establishments may enter the EU. The U.S. agencies involved in listing are the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Approved establishments may be subject to EU inspection. All EU-approved establishment lists are available on the USEU website (<http://www.usda-eu.org/>). Lastly, animal or public health certificates based on the model certificates published by the European Union and signed by U.S. officials must accompany all shipments. The U.S. certifying agency will delete any statements in the model certificate that are not applicable.

The EU imposes a number of general requirements for all veterinary certificates. Of these, there is one in particular that has repeatedly caused rejections of shipments at EU borders. In accordance with Council Directive 2002/99/EC; Annex IV.6 and Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 Annex VI.6, certificates must be issued before the consignments to which they relate leave the control of the competent authority. The U.S. regulatory agencies which issue health certificates (FSIS, APHIS and AMS) have all now included this requirement in their export libraries.

The EU import requirements for plants and plant products have also been harmonized and are published in a single directive. Unlike veterinary products, there is only one model certificate for all plant products in accordance with international regulations laid out by the International Plant Protection Convention of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (see: <https://www.ippc.int/sitemap/>). Phytosanitary certificates are issued by APHIS inspectors, who attest to specific requirements of EU legislation by making additional declarations in the relevant boxes.

Products Subject/Not Subject to Veterinary Certification – Composite Products

In order to have a more harmonized member State application of EU legislation, Commission Decision 2007/275/EC publishes a list of animals and animal products that are subject to veterinary checks.

Products subject to veterinary checks typically need to be accompanied by a veterinary certificate, issued by the competent authority in the U.S. This regulation also provides clarification on which composite products are subject to veterinary checks.

Composite products are defined as foodstuffs intended for human consumption that contain processed products of animal origin and ingredients of plant origin. Composite products include a wide variety of products, including cheesecakes, high protein food supplements, pizza, and lasagnas. While the U.S. is eligible to ship hormone-free meat, dairy products, egg products, and fishery products separately, shipping the composite products that combine these eligible ingredients is a more complicated matter.

All composite products containing a processed meat product are subject to a veterinary check.

Generally speaking, composite products that have more than 50 percent of animal origin products also require a certificate and there are certification requirements concerning the heat treatment for all dairy products. The EU has created a model health certificate for imports of composite products, which was implemented in 2012. A detailed Product Decision Tree to clarify the scope of the legislation was published in 2013. This guidance greatly expanded the number and types of products affected by the legislation.

Commission Decision 2007/275/EC also lists certain composite products that are not subject to veterinary checks, provided they are shelf stable and properly packaged and labeled. Unfilled gelatin capsules, cakes, meat extracts and other shelf stable products are on this list.

Section III. Specific Attestations Required on Export Certificate(s)

Whenever the EU publishes model veterinary certificates for use by eligible third country suppliers, U.S. regulatory agencies will cross-out any statement that refers to health situations that are not relevant to the United States.

Certificates for plants and plant products are issued by APHIS inspectors, who attest to the specific requirements of EU legislation with the necessary declarations in the space provided on the phytosanitary certificate.

A link to the required format in the Official Journal of each export certificate is provided (if available) in Appendix 1.

Section IV. Government Certificate's Legal Entry Requirements

Certificates must be in the official language of the Republic of Croatia, which is Croatian, as well as the MS where the border inspection occurs, if the product is not exported directly to the Republic of Croatia. According to Croatia's "Act on the Import of Food from Third Countries" (NN39/2013); the responsible party in the import procedure must provide the inspectors with the analytical reports and certificates in the Latin alphabet and translated into the Croatian language. However, for the time being, Croatia's inspectorate is accepting English language certificates although it is advised to use bilingual English/Croatian certificates.

Section V. Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements

There are no additional Croatian certificates (other than EU certificates) for food products derived from plants and animals.

There are voluntary certificates that may help reduce the level of import controls. For example, EU legislation does not require that nuts and peanuts are accompanied by an aflatoxin certificate. However, shipments with these certificates are only randomly sampled upon entry in the EU.

Author Defined:

U.S. Competent Authorities

The U.S. issuing agencies are identified by their acronyms. Following is a list of these agencies and a link to the relevant pages on their websites.

- AMS: Agricultural Marketing Service, USDA

European Union Health Certification Program

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/DYGradingEuropeanUnionHealthCertification>

- APHIS: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA

International Animal Export Regulations and International Animal Products Export Regulations

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/importexport>

Plant Export Services

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/import_export/plants/plant_exports/index.shtml

- FDA: Food and Drug Administration

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/ImportsExports/Exporting/default.htm>

- FGIS: Federal Grain Inspection on Service, GIPSA: Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA

<http://www.gipsa.usda.gov/fgismain.html>

- FSIS: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA

Export Requirements for the European Union:

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/international-affairs/exporting-products/export-library-requirements-by-country>

- NOAA: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

http://www.seafood.nmfs.noaa.gov/export/export_certification/euexport.html

For additional information on exporting seafood to the EU, please contact stephane.vrignaud@trade.gov

Croatian Competent Authorities

- Croatian Border Veterinary Inspection

<http://www.veterinarstvo.hr/default.aspx?id=153>

Government of the Republic of Croatia

Ministry of Agriculture

Planinska ulica 2a,

10000 Zagreb

Veterinary Directorate

Tel. +385 1 6443 540

Fax. +385 1 6443 899

E mail: office@mps.hr

web page: www.mps.hr

- Croatian Border Sanitary Inspection

http://www.zdravlje.hr/ministarstvo/ustroj_ministarstva/uprava_za_sanitarnu_inspekciju

Government of the Republic of Croatia

Ministry of Health

Ksaver 200a

10 000 Zagreb

Directorate for Sanitary Inspection

Tel. +385 1 4607 622

Fax. +385 1 4677 631

<http://www.zdravlje.hr/>

- Croatian EFSA Focal Point

<http://www.hah.hr/english/hah.php>

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